ALLY

A wealth of talent in one man shows

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ART
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BECAUSE of the flood of exhibitions in Johannesburg, several one-man shows have recently been unintentionally ignored.

Such as Tiiu Kadak's charming collection of protea studies, at the Lister Gallery, in which this hypersensitive artist shows a wealth of talent after obvious years of dedication to the difficult medium of watercolour.

Then there was Margaretha Kyle's first Johannesburg one-man exhibition of oil still lifes, at Gallery 101, Hollard Street.

The Kyle enchantment is robust and factual, but the obvious love and sincerity she brings to her still lifes of garden flowers will surely have the response from the public she aims for — being charmed by vases of white or mauve chrysanthemums or the merged colours of spring blossom.

There has also been an exceptionally competent and deeply thoughtful exhibition by Ruth Levy at the Goodman Gallery.

Ruth Levy thinks along far more intellectual lines than the last two artists, working in a totally abstract mood, devoting time and care to structural simplicity and textural finish.

This show had her taking a great stride forward, gaining economy and simplicity in her large oil compositions. But not, as yet, being tempted to venture into too remote artistic realms as so many very serious modern artists are inclined to do.

This intellectual mood was part of Spies Venter's recent exhibition, at Gallery 101, Rand Central, in which colour played little part indeed.

Venter showed bold, very simplified black and white drawings (on paper and also canvas), but his talent obviously lies more in his strict, meticulous wood carvings, though in these there is a tremendous amount of work which, in the end, is more embellishment for the initial dramatic structure of design.

At the Lidchi Gallery is an exhibition by Geoffrey Armstrong, Tadeus Jaroszynski and Douglas Portway — all very modern in very different ways with a dash of gentle impressionism from the British artist, Edward Dunstan R.A.

Armstrong has drawings with all the tautness and tangle of barbed wire. Jaroszynski paints with thought and care but the undercurrent fierceness of dramatic tonal contrasts and technical roughness seems an odd way of forcing the eye to focus on central figures that are rather like ghostly cartoon beings.

Portway is almost totally immersed in fastidious textures, invariably dealing with very limited shapes. And Dunstan, oddly enough, is a similar artist in his textural absorption even if he is intent with brief, economical realism rather than bold abstract imagery.